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# PC 510 The Servant as Pastoral Care Giver

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### Recommended Citation

Dinkins, Burrell D., "PC 510 The Servant as Pastoral Care Giver" (2003). *Syllabi*. Book 2124.  
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**ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

**A Syllabus and General Guide for  
PC510: The Servant as Pastoral Care Giver**

**Thursdays 9:00am – 11:40am**

**Fall Semester, 2003**

**prepared by**

**Burrell D. Dinkins, Th.D.**

“Besides seeing other persons for who they really are, I must see myself as I am. I need to see what I am doing and whether what I am doing helps or hinders the growth of others.”

## I. Course Description

This course may surprise you. Most students are interested in learning what to do and what to say in pastoral care and counseling situations. At first they are disappointed, or confused when they discover very little about doing or saying; rather it is more about thinking like a pastor and becoming a person who communicates a pastoral presence. You will be learning about the unique role of a pastor and the basic kinds of personal and collective concerns that pastors typically encounter. The primary modes of care to be examined are narrative pastoral conversations and the general care of persons by pastors and the community of faith.

## II. General Goals

Before you take this course you should know my goals, hopes and dreams for you as a student of pastoral care and counseling. I want to help you to:

1. Learn how to think and act like a pastor.
2. Understand some of the basic principles of listening, empathic responding and conversing as a pastor.
3. Integrate learnings from other theological studies through reflection upon specific acts of ministry.
4. Identify personal issues that may potentially strengthen or harm your ministry.
5. Discover models for recruiting, training and supervision of lay caregivers.
6. Establish healthy personal boundaries and ethical behaviors.

## III. Objectives of the Course

**Framing Objective:** My objective is to help you cultivate the habit of thinking like a pastor in your interactions with people during times of caring for them as an integral part and extension of the ministry of the community of faith.

Specific Objectives: Upon completion of this course you should be able to:

### A. **Explain** in writing:

1. An understanding of the historical, biblical, theological and theoretical foundations for personal care and counseling.
2. Plan for care and counseling from specific case examples.
3. Participate in a team research project and present recommendations for action plans to pastoral care concern.
4. Critically reflect on pastoral care and counseling issues.
5. Give critical, yet caring, comments to the ideas of class colleagues.

B. **Express** orally in class peer counseling sessions the use of basic listening skills and the art of hosting a pastoral conversation.

C. **Use** multiple resources for discovering information about caring ministry, especially the World Wide Web.

D. **Present and respond** to challenging material in a highly interactive dialogue with increased ability to raise critical questions and make helpful and insightful responses to the work of others.

#### IV. Prerequisites for PC510

Upon admission to the seminary no prerequisites for CO510 are required. This course is foundational for further classes in pastoral care and counseling.

#### Special Assignments

##### A. **Letters to the Professor:**

1. Definition: Letters to the Professor are opportunities for you to expand your knowledge by putting into written form the thoughts, experiences and questions regarding a particular subject. There is an interactive engagement between the person writing the reflection and the professor.

2. Subjects: The letters are to be limited to the subjects directly related to pastoral care and counseling. These subjects include: class presentations; readings in textbooks and research; personal experiences in providing or receiving care and counseling; personal thoughts and feelings about the pastoral ministry; questions to oneself or to the instructor. The subjects do not include personal journaling, diary writing or blowing off steam.

3. Methodology: Use personal pronouns: Referring to yourself as the writer use I, me or my, in all cases and avoid using you unless it is a direct quote, or it is addressed to the instructor. Claim your own experience instead of legitimizing it through projection onto another person such as the hypothetical “you”.

4. Avoid words like: must, should, need to, ought to, have to or other moral imperatives that sound “preachy.” This is parental language that demands compliance. Save these words for emergencies.

5. Avoid generalizations or analyzing words and phrases such as: “the truth is,” “in reality,” “all people,” “everyone,” “people say,” “research says” and “you know.” Just tell the story, or ask the questions.

6. Write as specifically as possible. Use the journalistic format of who, what, when, where, and how.

7. Write for your own learning. Avoid trying to impress the professor as the primary goal of writing. Be yourself by writing boldly. Demonstrate the struggle that comes from discovering new information, ideas and concepts. Ask yourself good growth oriented questions rather than

asking the professor too many questions. Concerns about your own care and counseling skills are especially important in these letters.

8. Write regularly. The letters to the professor are investments in your education. Give them time, thought and energy each week. No more than two letters will be accepted in any given week. No letters will be accepted after May 2.

9. Length of the reflection letters: Two no. 12 font size, double spaced, 8 1/2 x 11 pages about 550-600 words will be written per reflection. The quality of the letter is more important than the number of words.

**Due Dates:** Reflections are due at the start of class on **Thurs.** Sept. 25; October 9, 30; Nov. 13, Dec. 4.

**Papers over one week past the due date will be graded lower for each week overdue.**

**Letters must be placed in the manila folders used for taking attendance. If you miss the assigned date, wait until the following Thursday. No papers will be accepted through other means.**

Grading: Each of the five letters will be graded by the standards established in the methodology given above. Letters will be assigned a numerical grade of 1-4 for each of the five papers with a **maximum** total of 20 points.

Samples: Several copies of reflections by former students of this class (with their permission), are available for your review in the library reserve section for PC510. Please note that these were called dialogical reflections. Your letters will be personally addressed to me instead of an unnamed reader.

#### **B. Team Research Paper:**

1. Definition: A team is a small group of three to four course colleagues mutually committed to researching a pastoral care topic and writing a composite report with specific recommendations for action. This may demand more of you than doing the job alone. Most academic work is individually produced, on the other hand most ministry in the church is accomplished through cooperation with others. This course is designed to help you learn how to work with others in cooperative program development through conceptualization, planning, research, writing and execution of a specific pastoral care concern.

2. Methodology: Each team will choose a pastoral care issue not covered in class, but of mutual interest to all members of the team, from the suggested list provided in class for you. The paper will begin with a focal problem or scenario. The first page will give a brief Vignette (short story) that situates the research project in the context of ministry. The last page will give a summary of findings from the research and recommendations for action to meet the needs of the initial pastoral care concern. Teams are required to do an internet search on the topic chosen for

research. See the folder on library reserve for proper documentation of internet sources. Each paper will be graded according to the following criteria:

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| The Opening Vignette - | Is relevant to research topic<br>Presents a feasible pastoral problem.   |
| The Body of Research - | Flows naturally out of the opening vignette<br>Is well integrated by the team, as if written by one person.<br>Must use the Internet as a resource (explicitly stated in paper).<br>Is thoroughly addressed by the team.<br>Is written in a well-constructed writing style with minimal errors throughout. |
| The Closing Vignette - | Makes practical use of the research in responding to the initial problem.<br>Brings closure to the team's paper.   |

**Multiply your learning by exchanging a copy of the research paper with other teams.**

3. Due date: **Thursday, November 20**

4. Class credit: 25% of the final grade. Note: Normally all team members will receive the same grade – however grades may vary according to confidential team evaluation reports submitted by individual team members April 25 in sealed envelopes. **Papers will not be graded if evaluations are missing.**

## **VI. Reading Assignments:**

You are required to read a minimum of 1,500 pages. International students may request a reduced reading assignment. Keep a careful record of your reading. Add up and total the number of pages. You do not need to account for the amount of clock time you read. Forty pages of reading may be credited for each hour of audio and videotapes. Turn in the report at the beginning of the final exam period. **Missing reading reports will result in a 15% reduction of total grade.**

Be critical of what you read. Do not take the books and articles as the final authority. Just because it is printed does not make it truthful. I have chosen the readings because they are provocative and informative. If you disagree, that is fine; however, you must clarify in your mind the reasons and evidence upon which you are basing your disagreement. Keep an open mind and attention to what the authors have to say. Compare their insights to other authors and your own experiences. To get the most out of your readings reserve time to reflect. Enter into a silent dialogical conversation with the authors to discover your agreements and disagreements.

### **A. Required Reading:**

1. Dinkins, Burrell & Losoney. "Grief" (article on reserve shelf)

2. Shelly, Judith Allen. *Spiritual Care: A Guide for Caregivers*.
3. Frederic, Harold. *The Damnation of Theron Ware*.  
(I suggest that you read this novel as soon as possible.)
4. Kollar, Charles Allen: *Solution-Focused Pastoral Counseling*  
(This is our basic text for the theory and practice of pastoral counseling)
5. Kuenning, Delores. *Helping People Through Grief*.  
(Many students find this to be a very emotional book. You may want to read a few chapters at a time.)
6. Nichols, Michael P. *The Lost Art of Listening*: (This is the best book available for learning how to really listen and to discover why this is so difficult to do.)
7. Steinborn, Melvin. *Can the Pastor Do It Alone*.
8. Steinke, Peter. *How Your Church Family Works*.  
(Read this as soon as possible. We will use it early in the semester.)
9. Wimberley, Edward P. *Prayer In Pastoral Counseling*

**B. Recommended Readings:**

Cappa. *Biblical Approaches to Pastoral Counseling*.

Eppley/Melande. *Starting Small Groups and Keeping Them Going*

Gerkin, Charles. *An Introduction to Pastoral Care*.

Goleman. *Emotional Intelligence*.

Hartman, Olov. *Holy Masquerade* (Read with *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (on reserve)

Haugh, Kenneth. *Christian Caregiving*.

Icenogle, Gareth Weldon. *Biblical Foundations for Small Group Ministry*.

Patton, John. *Pastoral Care In Context*

Seamands, David. *The Healing of Damaged Emotions*

Stone, Howard W. *Theological Context for Pastoral Care Giving*.

Switzer, David. *The Minister As Crisis Counselor*

Course Credit: 15% for 1,500 pages read.

**Articles on Reserve:**

Addictions: Sexual

Pastoral Counseling: “Sex in the Parish”

Boundaries: “Sex in the Parish”

Boundaries: Sexual Exploitation

“Saying No”

Mentors, Marriage

Boundaries: “Incest and Clerical Relationships”

Boundaries: Dialogical Reflections

Boundaries: “Conduct Unbecoming a Preacher”

Stress: Clergy Under Siege

Boundaries: “Good Fences Make Good Pastors”

Boundaries: “Why Adulterous Pastors Should Not Be Restored”

Boundaries: Safety in the Therapy Hour

Pastoral Counseling: Professional and Ethical Issues

Boundaries: In Professional Relationships

Law: Counseling

Law: Hiring and Administrative Safeguards

VI. Course Procedures. Class Sessions: The size of a required class necessitates the use of mostly lecture method of teaching. Where appropriate, interactive class activities, class discussions, film, role-play, interviews, and guest lecturers will be utilized to communicate and integrate the subject matter of the course. Reading, writing, peer discussions, research for the team project, and exams will contribute to the learning process.

VII. Evaluation:

A. **General Approach:** Evaluation is a continuous process. It will take place throughout the semester. Please know that comments and grades are not intended as judgments of you as a person, but rather as a benchmark to let you know how well you are doing at a particular time and the end of the course. The paradox of this course is the contrast between conflicting expectations. I teach counseling from a not-knowing perspective; yet I am required to give grades based upon what you do know and accomplish. All students begin with a grade of A. It is up to each person to demonstrate that this grade is not merited. Ways for doing this are: (1) not doing assignments or completing them after the deadline (2) a lack of full participation in team projects with shared responsibility (3) completing assignments below the quality level of a graduate student (4) failing to demonstrate knowledge and practice of care and counseling skills (5) scoring below the standard on the semester final exam.

B. **Standards:** For successful completion of this course you will be expected to:



1. Think pastorally from a biblical, theological and behavioral science perspective.
2. Know and use listening skills and reflective questions.
3. Learn cooperatively and collaboratively.
4. Apply learnings to the practice of ministry.
5. Analyze assumptions of theories and practices of pastoral care and counseling.
6. Acquire information about Internet resources for pastoral care ministry.

C. **Grading System:** Numerical grades will be assigned to each item involved in the evaluation process. A letter grade based upon the accumulation of numerical points will be sent to the registrar at the end of the semester. No grades will be posted or distributed by the instructor. The following percentages are used for determining the letter grade.

|                         |                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Dialogical Reflections: | 20% (five reflections) |
| Team Term Paper         | 25%                    |
| Reading Report          | 15% (1,500 pages)      |
| Mid-Term Exam           | 15%                    |
| Final Exam              | 25% (to be announced)  |

See the grading scale in the *Grading and Evaluation* section in the Seminary catalog for grading criteria.

**Note: Turning in assignments after the time indicated will result in a reduction of the grade points.**

D. **Incomplete grades.** An incomplete will be given only in the case of severe illness or other extreme circumstances. Please be aware that the final decision on receiving permission for an incomplete grade belongs to the Dean of the School of Theology.

E. **Course Evaluations:** I welcome your observations on how well this course is proceeding. When necessary, we will make mid-course corrections to get as much benefit from the class as possible. If you do not understand something please ask me. There will be a formal opportunity for you to confidentially evaluate the course and me at the end of the semester. I value your participation in the improvements to my teaching and the subject matter taught. Please take this request seriously and approach the opportunity prayerfully and honestly.

“You are your own best teacher. How well you do in school, how much you learn and the grades you get are entirely up to you.”

Adam Robinson  
*What Smart Students Know*

### VIII. Office Hours and Contact Information

Time to talk with the professor about course related matters is available upon request.

Messages may be left on the voice mail system.

My E-mail address is burrell\_dinkins@asburyseminary.edu

My Business phone is 407-482-7652. My home phone is 407-977-3948 (no calls, except emergencies, after 9:30 pm).

### IX. Class Schedule \*

| <u>Date</u>   | <u>Units of Class Sessions and Reading Assignments</u>  |
|---------------|---|
| Thu. Sept. 4  | Orientation to The Servant As Pastoral Care Giver<br>Organization of class support teams and research projects<br>Counseling skill practice                           |
| Thu. Sept. 11 | A biblical understanding of pastoral care and counseling<br>Counseling skill practice   |
| Thu. Sept. 18 | A theological understanding of pastoral care and counseling<br>Read and be prepared to discuss: <u>The Damnation of Theron Ware</u>                                   |
| Thu. Sept. 25 | Pastoring in times of suffering.<br>Film: "Pastoring Sick and Dying People"<br>Read: <u>Helping People Through Grief</u>  |
| Thu. Oct.2    | Issues in Death and Dying<br>Making difficult ethical decisions<br>Read the article "Grief" (on reserve)  |
| Thu. Oct. 9   | Becoming a solution oriented pastoral counselor<br>Read and be prepared to discuss: <u>Solution-Focused Pastoral Counseling</u><br>Film: "Irreconcilable Differences" |
| Thu. Oct. 16  | The art of asking good questions.<br>Counseling skill practice  |
| Thu. Oct. 23  | Pre-marital Counseling<br>Skill Practice Session<br>Mid-Term Exam   |
| Thu. Oct 30   | Marriage Counseling<br>Film: "Counseling Practice"  |

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Thu. Nov. 6  | Spiritual Care<br>Counseling skill practice<br>Read: <u>Spiritual Care</u>  |
| Thu. Nov. 13 | Pastoral Visitation<br>Visiting skill practice  |
| Thu. Nov. 20 | The Caring Community<br>Read: <u>Can the Pastor Do it Alone?</u> and <u>How your Church Family Works</u>  |
| Thu. Nov. 27 | No Class – Fall Reading Week  |
| Thu. Dec. 4  | Mental Illness<br>Caring for the Caretaker<br>Plan to see the film: “A Beautiful Mind” before class (on Library reserve or in your community video store) |
| Thu. Dec. 11 | Final Exam  |

**\* The instructor reserves the right to change this schedule of class topics and assignments any time during the semester.**